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Editors Note – This has been a very busy past few months. Our Women Veterans program is up and running. Many of you have been to our web site and sent in your registration forms and have received your Missouri Women Veterans sticker. This newsletter is designed for you, so let me know what you think about the articles and information contained in this issue. Don't forget to send in any information and/or any upcoming events that you would like to see published. Also, if you want to be featured in our Women in Uniform Past or Present, don't forget to send in your photo and information. It was great to see so many of you at the Tribute to Women Veterans in St. Louis on Nov. 19, and to meet more of you at the Vietnam Wall in Jefferson City on Nov. 22. Remember, together we can reach all the Women Veterans in Missouri and let them know about their benefits. I would also like to thank Portraits by Long for supplying the photograph of me. They do wonderful work and are located in St. Joseph.

WOMEN VETERANS IN VIETNAM



On Nov. 22, 2005, I had the privilege of being at the opening ceremonies of the Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall in Jefferson City. I was there in the capacity as the State of Missouri Women Veterans' Coordinator. I observed that in all the displays in the computer tent, that none of them contained any pictures of Women Veterans. In the future, more information and education will be provided about Women Veterans to ensure their presence in war is not overlooked. The public's perception still persists that somehow women's role is not as important as men's role in war. This is what Women Veterans have been trying to overcome since the beginning of war. As the Women Veterans Coordinator, my challenge is to attempt to dispel these myths.

I discovered an excellent web site <http://userpages.aug.com/captbarb>. In it, it states that over 500 WAC's were stationed in Vietnam, women Marines were in Vietnam, over 600 women in the Air Force were there and the Army, Navy, and Air Force nurses and medical specialist numbered over 6,000. There are 8 Women Veterans names on the wall. The Vietnam Women's Memorial depicts three women, one of whom is tending to a wounded soldier. There are 8 trees planted around the memorial to commemorate each of the 8 women who died in Vietnam.

So Vietnam women of Missouri stand up and be counted! Make 2006 the year you apply for your potentially earned benefits if you have not already. So many of the Vietnam Women Veterans should be applying for PTSD, or one or more of the presumptive diseases caused by exposure to Agent Orange. If you put one foot on Vietnam soil, then you were exposed to Agent Orange, men and women alike. Contact me and I will get you on our registry. If you would like to talk to a Veteran Service Officer about your potential earned benefits, contact me and I will get in touch with a Veterans Service Officer near you to assist you in your application for benefits.

Karen Etzler, VSO
Women Veterans Coordinator
525 Jules, Rm. 320
St. Joseph, MO 64501
816/387-2841
Mailto:Karen.Etzler@mvc.dps.mo.gov



PRESENT *Women in Uniform*

Major Stephanie W. Williams

I am an Instructor Pilot at the Advanced Airlift Tactics Training Center, St. Joseph, MO. I'm a Native of Kansas City, and have earned a degree in Political Science with a minor in Foreign Language from the United States Air Force Academy in 1991. I graduated from Undergraduate Pilot Training at Reese Air Force Base, TX, in October 1992 and earned a Master of Aeronautical Science degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 2000. My assignments have included 1993-1996 C-130



21st/36th Airlift Squadron, Yokota AB, Japan, Aircraft Commander, 1996-1999, C-130 50 AS, Little Rock AFB, AR, Flight Examiner/Instructor Pilot. 1999-2000, C-130 53 AS, Little Rock AFB, AR, DoD Formal School Instructor Pilot. 2000-2002, C-130 180 AS, St. Joseph, MO, Instructor Pilot. 2001-2002 MD-80, Vanguard Airlines, Kansas City, MO, First Officer. 2002-present, C-130, AATTC, St. Joseph, MO, Combat Tactics Instructor Pilot. I am a Veteran of Operation Southern Watch and Operation Joint Forge.

Master Sgt. Jody McKinley

I was born in St. Joseph, MO, and graduated from Benton High School, in 1981. I earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Personnel Psychology (Cum Laude) from Missouri Western State College in 1987. I joined the Missouri Air National Guard in



1985, where I was a Computer Systems Specialist for the 139th TAG, St. Joseph, until 1992. Since 1992 I have been the AATTC Intelligence Registrar, Practical Intelligence Course and Intelligence

Formal Training Unit Instructor. I love my job as I get to work with students from 13 allied nations to include, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Spain, Canada, Belgium, and the UK. I also work with all 4 branches of service and all major commands. I was honored with the 2005 Outstanding Senior NCO of the Year for the 139th Airlift Wing and the State of Missouri.

PAST

Mother/Daughter Veterans

Patricia Hawes

I enlisted in the US Army corps. In Feb. 1967. After basic training, I attended an advanced clerical training course for 8 weeks. Upon completion of my advanced training, I was assigned to the housing division at Fort McClellan, Alabama. I typed up

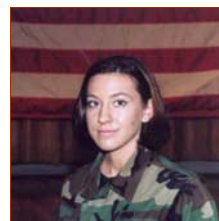


housing assignments, and compiled statistical data. A few months later, I was selected to a six month temporary duty assignment at the Pentagon in Washington DC. I typed various reports on a Vietnam task force for 12 GS civilians, 1 female colonel, and a brigadier

general. When that assignment was completed, I was assigned to the Adjutant Generals' office at Fitzsimmons General Hospital in Denver Colorado as an Administrative Specialist, where I completed my remaining enlistment. Both my daughter and I were proud to have served our country.

Jaime Hawes

I joined the Air Force in 1996. After tech school I was assigned to Dover AFB in Delaware. My first squadron was the 436th Communications squadron. I started out working at the base Post Office. We handled all classified and unclassified mail that entered the base. After 2 yrs, I moved to Records Management. In records, we managed and processed all FOIA requests, worked with JAG, and



kept track of all base records old and new. I was promoted to the administrator/work group manager for 5 flights with the Equipment Maintenance squadron, approx. 1000 or so people. I typed and edited Eprs, Oprs, decorations, letters,

regulations, and handled all squadron mail. I also did maintenance on all flight computers and took classes on how to repair hardware problems, web and e-mail problems, and learned how to build systems. I worked there for a year directly for our flight commander and our flight chief. I also worked as the planner for our Booster Club, which helped morale by hosting special events throughout the year.



SERVICE TO VETERANS PROGRAM

Are you a woman veteran, thinking about applying for some of your VA benefits, but do not know where or how to do it? The Missouri Veterans Commission (MVC) has 33 Veterans Service Officers (VSO) and 3 Veterans Service Assistant's (VSA) who are VA accredited, to explain your potential benefits to you. They are expertly trained and highly knowledgeable in all areas of veteran's benefits. These VSO's and VSA's have many offices located throughout the State of Missouri to make filing a claim for your earned benefits easier for you. Once you have filed a claim with your service officer, he/she will assist you with any follow-up paperwork the VA may ask for, and follow your claim until your benefits have been received. All VSO's are veterans themselves, so you are dealing with someone who has shared military service as well. The MVC has 4 women VSO's (not pictured Valerie Branch, USA, 83-87) and 3 women VSA's (non veterans) that are pictured below. Sometimes a woman feels more comfortable dealing with a woman. To contact a VSO or VSA in your area, contact MVC Central Office at 573/751-3779 or call 866-Vet-Info, or go to MVC's web site at www.mvc.dps.mo.gov and click on Service To Veterans.



Karen Etzler, VSO
USAF
1974-79/1981-84



Celia Thompson, VSO
USAF
1985-1993



Julie Olson, VSO
USA
1986-91



Janeene Pierce, VSA
MVC
25 yrs



Helen Kneir, VSA
MVC
20 yrs



Shirley Ryker, VSA
MVC
20 yrs.

MEET YOUR SENATOR OR STATE REPRESENTATIVE

The Missouri Association of Veterans Organizations (MAVO) is holding its legislative days at the Missouri Capital on Jan. 23-24, 2006. You can visit with your Senator or Representative between the scheduled events.

7:00 p.m., Jan. 23 – Legislative reception-VFW post 1003, 217 E. Capital Ave. Jefferson City. Hosted by MAVO and Missouri Veterans Commission Foundation, Inc.

8:00 a.m., Jan. 24 - Coffee and Donuts - Missouri Capital, 3rd Floor.

10:00 a.m., Jan. 24 – Missouri Veterans Commission (MVC) Meeting, Room 400, Truman Office Bldg.

1:30 p.m., MAVO Meeting, Room 400, Truman Office Bldg.

5:30 p.m., Testimony before Joint Session Senate & House Veterans Committees, Missouri Capital, 3rd Floor, Senate Lounge.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MVC is planning 3 more Supermarket of Veterans Benefits. Karen, the Women Veterans Coordinator, will be attending the event in Warrensburg, on Saturday, April 29.

March 18, Palmyra
April 29, Warrensburg
April 29, Kirksville, Kirksville Armory

Please check the MVC website for more information on upcoming Supermarkets.

In 1965 Master Sgt. Josephine S. (Gebbers) Davis became the first woman Marine to be assigned attaché duty and the first to serve under hostile fire.

Women's Memorial



Ask Karen



Q. Can a woman draw a pension from the VA even if she did not go over seas or fight in a war, or carry a gun?

A. Potentially, this is true for men and women Veterans. Pension is not determined by going overseas, fighting IN a war or carrying a gun. Pension is determined by the time frame you served, (must have 1 day DURING a declared war period), by your discharge, by your net worth and income, and also by your age or being permanently and totally disabled. Also men and women Veterans can apply for compensation if they were hurt while serving, which has a different set of guidelines. Contact a Veteran Service Officer to find out if you qualify. Veteran Service Officers can be located on our web site at www.mvc.dps.mo.gov or 1-866-VET-INFO.

Q. Are female Veterans allowed into Veteran nursing homes?

A. Absolutely! Female Veterans have the same benefits as their male counterparts. The Missouri Veterans Commission has 7 Veterans homes located at the following locations in Missouri: Cameron, Mexico, St. Louis, Cape Girardeau, Warrensburg, St. James, and Mt. Vernon.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thanks for creating a NEWSLETTER specifically directed at FEMALE VETERANS. We ladies have always had (in my estimation) extremely good care from the VA. But, we have never had any kind of publication (or online source) dedicated solely to Female Veterans. My hat (or should I say Beret) is off to you for creating a medium in which we now have a forum to sound off. I found your first issue very entertaining and enlightening. I would love to see this little newsletter grow into a national publication for Women Veterans. As a service connected Veteran, I have been receiving treatment from the VA for 27 years and have seen many changes over that period of time. And yet still found information within your newsletter that I had not been aware of before. I am sure that the younger Veterans will find many things of interest within your pages. Having dealt with the VA in North Carolina, Michigan, and now Missouri, I would like to offer my gratitude for the exemplary service I have received from you and your office. I attended the Veterans Day celebrations here in my little town of Dearborn and was again disappointed to not see other female Veterans attending. I am fairly sure that I am not the only one in my area. But, I must admit in all honesty, that until I moved here, I had never attended any Veterans Day affairs as a Veteran before. I am sure, like most of you out there, that although I served in the Army, I never thought of myself as being a Veteran. So, let me take this opportunity to urge all of you to attend the next Veterans Day affair in your area.

Kathlynn White, Army Veteran

In 1970 The Army promoted the first women to brigadier general: Anna Mae Hays, Chief, Army Nurse Corps, and Elizabeth P. Hoisington, WAC Director.

Women's Memorial



U.S. WOMEN OF THE AIR FORCE BAND

Established in 1951 by Col. George Howard, this all woman band was used primarily as a recruitment aid, to entertain the troops and to beef up public relations, until its deactivation in 1961. During this 10-year period, 235 women rotated through the band. The life was rigorous. They flew to engagements aboard military aircraft and were required to take basic parachute training. They also had to travel with irons and ironing boards to stay wrinkle free. Privacy was non-existent, as most bases were geared for male personnel. These wonderful women consider themselves the Grandmothers of all women who are in military bands today. In September 2005, 39 members of the band held 3 concerts during their annual reunion in Independence. Missouri was honored by their presence!

Is This the Wicked Witch of the West? No, It's Kathlynn White, US Army Veteran



While attending AIRBORNE training at Ft. Benning, GA, we were taught all the procedures for different types of landing surfaces from ground, to water, to power lines, to trees. They did not however inform us of what we would look like after experiencing any of these. This picture was taken the day I landed in a tree and had to deploy my reserve parachute and climb down the risers. Then without my knowledge, it was posted on the 7th Special Forces Group headquarters bulletin board with the caption "wicked witch of the west".

In 1971 Jeanne M. Holm, WAF Director, became the first woman in the Air Force promoted to brigadier general.

Women's Memorial

POINTS OF CONTACT

VA Regional Office:

Anita Thomas-VA Regional Office Women Veteran Coordinator..... 314/552-9685

Richard Ivy-Homeless Veterans Outreach Coordinator/OEF/OIF Coordinator..... 314/552-9561

Sandra Davenport-Public Affairs Officer..... 314/552-9710

VA Regional Office 800/827-1000

Vet Centers:

Linda M. Housman, Ph.D., St. Louis 314/231-1260

Ronda Sanders-Mowvary, MSW, Kansas City 816/753-1866

In 1972 the hospital ship USS Sanctuary sailed with a male/female crew.

Women's Memorial

Missouri Women Veterans News is written and published by Missouri Veterans Commission, Service to Veterans staff.

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Editor and Women Veterans Coordinator, Karen Etzler
Layout and Copy Assistant, Pamela Robbins
Webmaster, Bonnie McNeill-Boyt

<http://www.mvc.dps.mo.gov/>



Sticker Sent Yes/No (please circle one)

State of Missouri Women Veterans

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime phone: _____

Email address: _____

Birth date: _____ / _____ / _____
Day Month Year

Place of Birth _____
City/State

Service (Circle one) USA USMC USN USAF OTHER _____

Service dates: From _____ To _____
From _____ To _____

Receiving VA or Medical Benefits: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what benefit: _____ (i.e. pension, comp., medical, etc.)

Have received benefits in the past: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what benefit: _____

Would you like a veteran's Service Officer in your local area to contact you to explain your
Potential benefits? Yes _____ No _____

To receive your free Woman Veteran State Sticker
Return this to: Missouri Veterans Commission/Karen Etzler
Women Veterans Coordinator/VSO
525 Jules, Room 320
St. Joseph, MO 64501
816/387-2841
or send a request via e-mail to:
Karen.Etzler@mvc.dps.mo.gov